

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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Institutions may subscribe to *Iowa Bird Life* for \$15 per year. Individuals may join the Iowa Ornithologists' Union according to the following membership classes: Regular (\$12); Regular as spouse or minor child of another Regular member without publications (\$4 first additional family member, \$2 each additional family member); Contributing (\$12 plus any additional tax-deductible contribution to the I.O.U.); and Life (\$250 as single payment or \$62.50 for each of four years). Members will also receive the quarterly *I.O.U. News* and are eligible to vote and hold office in the Union. Send subscriptions, membership payments, or address changes to Francis L. Moore, Treasurer, 336 Fairfield St., Waterloo, IA 50703.

## INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other materials relating to birds and bird finding in Iowa should be sent to the editor. Accepted manuscripts will generally be published promptly, depending on space available, with the following absolute deadlines: 15 November for the Winter issue; 15 February for the Spring issue; 15 May for the Summer issue; and 15 July for the Fall issue. Most manuscripts will be refereed. All material should be typed double-spaced or hand printed in ink on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. Authors should pattern their style after a current issue of the journal. If you want more detailed guidelines or advice regarding the appropriateness of your topic for *Iowa Bird Life*, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor.

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\*19-21 May 1989, Davenport

### FIELD REPORTS

Anyone observing birds in Iowa is encouraged to report their findings on a quarterly basis to the Field Reports editors. Sample reporting and documentation forms suitable for duplication are available from the editor (send self-addressed stamped envelope to T. H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246). An article describing the reporting process is also available.

Deadlines for receipt of field reports are as follows:

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\*Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov)—3 December (Carl J. Bendorf, 825 7th Ave, Iowa City, IA 52240)

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\*Deadline for receipt of reports: 15 January. For forms and instructions write: W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653.

### IOWA BIRDLINE 319-338-9881

The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Jim Fuller checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night.

### I.O.U. NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editors (J. Hank and Linda Zaletel, 715 West St., Colo, IA 50056).

### MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The following materials may be obtained by writing the editorial office (Iowa Bird Life, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246):

\*Order form for back issues of *Iowa Bird Life*: send self-addressed stamped envelope.

\*Field Checklist of Iowa Birds—1987 Edition: 10 for \$1.65, 25 for \$3.50, 100 for \$11.60, postpaid.

Also available at annual meetings for \$0.10 each.

### REPORTING NEBRASKA BIRDS

Sightings of Nebraska birds, including those within the Nebraska portion of De Soto N.W.R., should be reported to Loren and Babs Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, NE 68005. Formats for reporting and documentation are the same as for Iowa.

### ADDRESS CHANGES

Please send address changes/corrections to Francis Moore, 336 Fairfield St., Waterloo, IA 50703.

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## MEET AN IOWA BIRDER: BARBARA L. WILSON

TANYA BRAY

Originally from southern Michigan, Barb Wilson began birding there during her childhood. Much of her love for the outdoors and early knowledge of birds came under the tutelage of her grandmother. In her teens, Barb cared for captive wild birds and animals at the Kalamazoo Nature Center. Barb received her B.A. degree in biology from Kalamazoo College in 1972.

After graduation, she moved to Oregon and in 1974 earned a teaching certificate from the University of Oregon. With this, she joined the Peace Corps and spent 1975 and 1976 on the island of Tonga in the South Pacific teaching high school biology and general science to students preparing for the New Zealand University entrance exams. Birding in Tonga was complicated by the fact that Tongans felt it improper and unsafe for a woman to wander alone into the bush. But Barb did manage to see a few species; among her favorites were Many-colored Fruit Doves and Wattled Honeyeaters.

Barb also managed to find time to meet her future husband, fellow Peace Corps worker John Wilson, who was in Tonga doing agricultural research. They were married in March 1977 in Oregon, and shortly thereafter, Barb arrived in Iowa as John returned home to his family farm.

Barb received her M.A. degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Her thesis was entitled "Wing-shuffling as a Thermoregulatory Mechanism in Pied-billed Grebes." Currently, she teaches ecology and biology to non-majors at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. In addition to her teaching duties, Barb has more than doubled the bird specimen collection at the University by her diligent and relentless scavenging of road-kills. She has even perfected the difficult skill of making a bird or animal specimen while riding in a moving vehicle (riding not driving!). She also made significant additions to the University's herbarium. The Omaha Audubon Society meetings are enhanced by Barb's interesting and informative displays.

During the summer, she serves as the Page County Naturalist. Barb arranges for programs or gives them herself each Friday of the season at Pioneer Park in Clarinda. She also started a plant collection for Page County, garnering over 1,400 specimens and identifying over 500 species.

Barb joined the Iowa Ornithologists' Union in 1978. She served on the Records Committee from 1982 to 1988. She is on the Breeding Bird Atlas



Committee and an active participant in that project. Barb has contributed several interesting and informative articles to *Iowa Bird Life* and *Nebraska Bird Review*, the most memorable being "Just Call Them All Sea Gulls" (*Iowa Bird Life* 56:3).

Barb participated in the barn owl restoration project in 1984 and 1985. A barn owl box was placed in the barn on the Wilson farm, and Barb hacked out the young during the summer. Unfortunately, the barn owls have not returned.

One cannot know Barb Wilson long before becoming impressed with her knowledge of and enthusiasm for birds. Any project she undertakes is thoroughly researched and tirelessly pursued to its conclusion. Often, innocent bystanders will be caught up and swept along by her zeal. Barb never misses an opportunity to teach someone about the intricacies of nature. She has infinite patience when dealing with children or beginners.

Recently Barb has added *Lepidoptera* to her list of interests; consequently, she spends a great deal of time making photographic studies of the various species of butterflies.

For those who may not know Barb personally, the following two field marks may help identify her in the field: (1) Bandana—don't be fooled if it is not red. She has a very large, multicolored collection; and (2) 4 x 6 inch cards peeking out of back pocket. These cards are plucked out and notes taken at the drop of a rare bird.

9708 Grover, Omaha, NE 6812



*Ross' Goose (with Snows), DeSoto N.W.R., 25 November 1987. Photo by Steve Dinsmore.*



# RECORDS OF FERRUGINOUS HAWK IN IOWA

BARBARA L. WILSON

Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*) is a large buteo of the western grasslands and mountains. Its normal range is just to the west of Iowa. Although it is listed as Casual for Iowa on the most recent official list of Iowa birds (I. O. U. Records Committee 1986), the status of Ferruginous Hawk in Iowa is in doubt because identification problems, which I discussed in a previous article (Wilson 1986), make evaluation of past records difficult. Here I attempt to sort out what little is known with certainty and what may be reasonably surmised from published records and documentations of Ferruginous Hawk in Iowa through 1987.

For reports of Ferruginous Hawk I relied heavily on copies of published records and documentations on file with the Records Committee and a summary of those reports prepared by Tom Kent. Follow-up information was obtained on several reports. Copies of all but the most recent documentations and those published records that contained any descriptive detail were evaluated by William S. Clark, coauthor of *A Field Guide to Hawks North America* (Clark and Wheeler 1987). Reports since 1980 have been evaluated by the Records Committee. Conclusions in this article, however, are my own and may differ from those of Clark and/or the Records Committee.

Of the 45 records of Ferruginous Hawk (table), few can be considered correct with a high degree of certainty. Of eight records based on dead birds, only one specimen remains, an immature bird from Iowa County dated 21 August 1936 now at the University of Iowa (photos). Another positively identified bird was a banded immature found dead 3 miles north of Pocahontas on 27 October 1977. The bird was banded as a nestling near Medina, North Dakota, on 27 June 1977 (Gilmer et al. 1985, Gilmer letter to James Dinsmore). No specimens or useful descriptions are available for the other dead birds.

Three sight records describing adult birds mention the reddish mantle or for other reasons seem to be correct (31 December 1954, Grundy Co.; 28 October 1973 and 26 October 1983, Page Co.). I consider 34 of the 37 sight records unacceptable. Sixteen of these lack any descriptive detail and the remaining 18 have varying amounts of description that seems insufficient for identification or inconsistent with Ferruginous Hawk. Some of these descriptions are very suggestive and perhaps correct, but not completely convincing. In fact, as shown in the table, Clark and the I. O. U. Records Committee have sometimes disagreed on how to interpret these documentations.

It is interesting to note that the accepted sight records are of adults, but the two tangible records are of immatures. I would expect that the majority of Ferruginous Hawks in Iowa would be immatures, since first-year birds fledged in North Dakota have been noted to wander during migration and in their first summer (Gilmer et al. 1985). Unfortunately, immature Ferruginous Hawks are difficult to describe in a way that is both honest and convincing. Therefore, I believe that some of the recently documented immatures may have been Ferruginous Hawks even though the records can not be considered to be beyond doubt.

# Ferruginous Hawk Records for Iowa Through 1987

Date	County	Reference	Comment
25 Jun 1901	Black Hawk	DuMont 1933	specimen lost?
before 1907	Linn	Anderson 1907	detail, Clark-
4 Nov 1914	Wapello	Spiker 1924	dead bird, no detail
17 Sep 1917	Woodbury	Stephens 1918	mounted, no detail
2 Apr 1919	Keokuk	DuMont 1933	2, no detail
7 Dec 1919	Story	Stoner 1920	specimen, no detail
3 Oct 1921	Woodbury	Stephens 1930	mounted dark female
23 Nov 1921	Plymouth	Stephens 1930	mounted female
28 Mar 1923	Keokuk	DuMont 1933	2, no detail
17 Mar 1926	Buchanan	Pierce 1930	no detail
6 Jun 1929	Polk	DuMont 1929	2, detail, Clark-
13 Apr 1930	Buchanan	Pierce 1930	no detail
29 Mar 1934	Dallas-Perry	DuMont 1934	2, detail, Clark-
29 Mar 1934	Dallas-Long Pond	DuMont 1934	2, no detail
9 Apr 1934	Dickinson	DuMont 1934	detail, Clark-
11 Apr 1934	Clay	DuMont 1934	no detail
17 Apr 1934	Emmet	DuMont 1934	detail, Clark-
20 Mar 1936	Woodbury	Stiles 1946	no detail
21 Aug 1936	Iowa	Univ. IA specimen 29674	See photos
2 Jan 1939	Johnson	Johnson 1939	3, detail, Clark-
13 May 1946	Dickinson/Emmet	Musgrove et al. 1947	no detail
8 Sep 1946	Polk	Stiles 1946	no detail
1 Oct 1951	Fremont	Brown 1971	no detail
31 Dec 1954	Grundy	IBL 25:10	detail, Clark+
3 Nov 1962	Adair	Petersen 1962	detail, Clark-
1963	Marshall	IBL 34:10	no detail
1963	Cherokee	IBL 34:20	no detail
26 Dec 1966	Bremer	IBL 37:6	no detail
26 Dec 1970	Page	IBL 41:13	detail, Clark-
17 Dec 1972	Story	IBL 43:4	no detail
28 Oct 1973	Page	IBL 43:104	7, detail, Clark+
28 Dec 1974	Bremer	IBL 45:8	no detail
Feb 1977	Lucas	Roosa and Bartlett 1977	no detail
27 Oct 1977	Pocahontas	Gilmer et al. 1985	road kill, banded
27 Oct 1977	Page	doc, IBL 47:144	
Feb 1978	Harrison	IBL 48:70	detail, Clark-
3,7 Feb 1979	Johnson/Iowa	doc (2), IBL 49:24	Clark-
26 Dec 1980	Fremont	doc, IBL 52:42	RC(80-27)-, Clark-
26 Oct 1983	Page	doc, IBL 54:38	RC(83-31)+, Clark+
22 Sep 1984	Marshall	doc, IBL 55:58	RC(84-24)+, Clark-
25 Oct 1984	Pocahontas	doc (2), IBL 55:58	RC(84-23)-, Clark+
23 Dec 1984	Tama	doc, IBL 55:58	RC(84-34)-
28 Mar 1985	Cherokee	doc, IBL 56:44	RC(85-03)-
29 Sep 1985	Story	doc, IBL 86:44	RC(85-16)-, Clark+
1 Feb 1986	Appanoose	doc, IBL 57:78	RC(86-06)-

IBL citations are for Field Reports, Christmas Bird Counts, Bird Banding Summaries, and Records Committee Reports in Iowa Bird Life; doc = documentation on file with Records Committee; no detail = no description of the bird; RC() = Records Committee (record number); Clark = William S. Clark; + = accepted record; - = record not accepted.

Reports since 1970 were all from fall and winter (September through February). Most were from October (5), December (5), and February (4), months when this species is expected. Of course, other hawks, including Krider's Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamacensis krideri*), also migrate through and winter in Iowa during these months and may be confused with Ferruginous Hawk.



The older records are not as confined seasonally. The records of dead birds are from each of the months August through December and from June. Sight records include about as many spring records as fall-winter records, and a few observations are from summer.

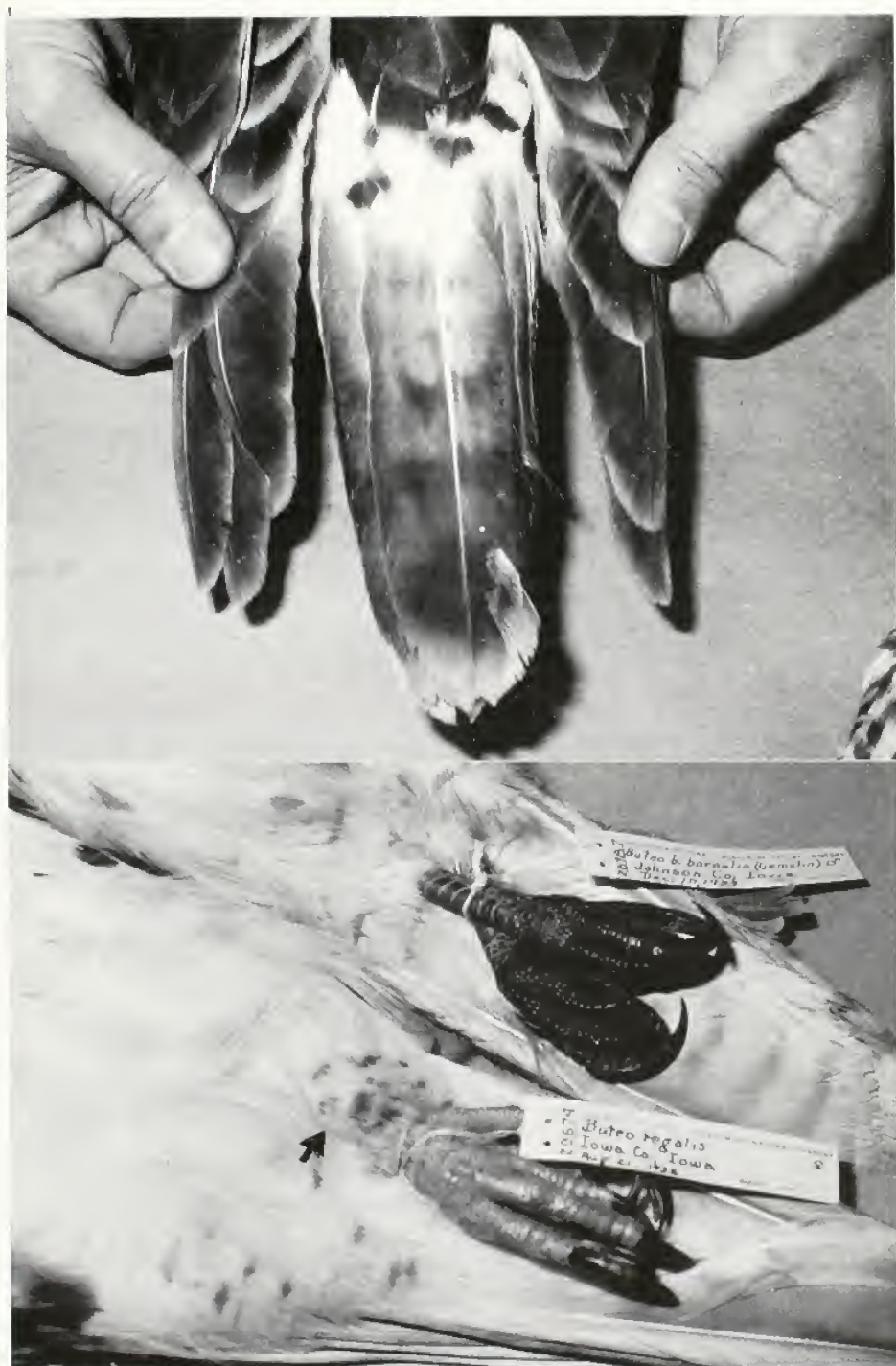
One might dismiss the breeding season reports as identification errors; indeed, the scraps of description available reveal a lack of knowledge needed to identify Ferruginous Hawk in the field. Nevertheless, two summer reports are hard to ignore, since they are based on specimens. Ferruginous Hawk is almost as easy to identify in the hand as it is difficult to identify in the field. Feathered tarsi are easy to recognize in the hand (photo) and exclude all other species except Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*), a species that is even less likely in summer in Iowa. The August bird is now the specimen at the University of Iowa. DuMont (1933) lists a specimen collected on 25 June 1901 from Cedar Falls and said to be at Iowa State Teachers College (now University of Northern Iowa). An old specimen now at that University lacks any data on date or place of collection (letter from Dave Conrads to the author), but may be the same bird.

The range of Ferruginous Hawk has been declining, but it still breeds locally in central and rarely in eastern South Dakota (Whitney et al. 1978). Possibly when the species was more common on the eastern edge of its range, individuals wandered into the Iowa in summer.

The status of Ferruginous Hawk in other nearby states confirms that Iowa is on the edge of the species range. The hawk is not known to breed in Minnesota, but is a regular, rare migrant in spring and fall, especially in western part of the state near its Dakota breeding range, and spring sightings are about twice as common as fall sightings there (Janssen 1987). The species breeds rarely in western Nebraska and it regularly winters there as well. Schmutz and Fyfe (1987) consider its winter range to include northern Mexico and all of the western United States south and west of the northeast corner of Nebraska, although birders resident in eastern Nebraska consider it most unusual in the eastern one-third of the state (T. Bray and B. Padelford, personal communication).

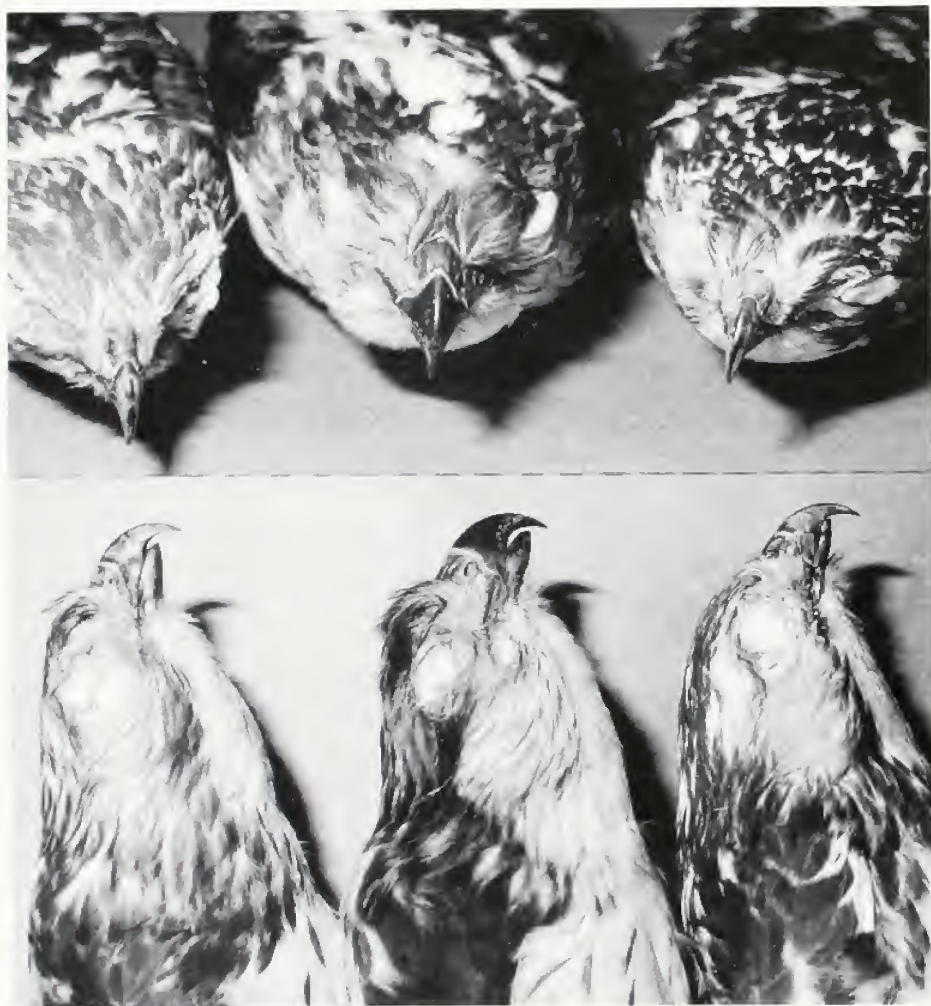
Few Ferruginous Hawks are reported east of Iowa, and probably not all are accurate. A highly respected Illinois observer considers his own reports invalid and indicates that others are open to question (Bohlen 1986), so we are not the only state that has a problem determining the frequency of this species.

At least five records of Ferruginous Hawk in Iowa appear to be substantiated, and some of the others were likely correctly identified as well, but are not adequately described. Three of the five acceptable records are from the last ten years, barely enough to consider the species Casual. Iowa is just east of the known regular range of this species, so one would expect it to occur as a rare but regular migrant and perhaps winter visitor, especially in western Iowa. More information is now available in field guides on hawk identification, especially of immature birds. Careful observation and recording of details seen (and photographs!) should yield more Ferruginous Hawk records for Iowa.



Immature Ferruginous Hawk, Iowa Co., 21 Aug 1936. Top: banded gray tail is beginning to turn red near the white basal area. Note large black spots on white greater upper tail coverts. Bottom: feathered tarsi with dark spots (arrow) compared to Red-tailed Hawk above with unfeathered tarsi. Photos by T. H. Kent.





*Ferruginous Hawk flanked by two Red-tailed Hawks. Compared to the Red-tailed, the Ferruginous has a large head and beak, wide gape (mouth), light cheek without malar line, and dark eye line. University of Iowa specimens. Photos by T. H. Kent.*



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# MAPPING VAGRANTS

THOMAS H. KENT

Finding rare birds is one of the great thrills of birding. Most rare birds are vagrants—birds that are outside of their normal range. When birds leave their normal area of residence or their normal path of migration, the event is usually not entirely accidental. Some of the causes of vagrancy include over migration, migration in the wrong direction, being blown off course by bad weather, dispersal in search of food, juveniles that are lost, and young birds expanding the species' range. By studying the occurrence of vagrants, one can often get an idea of the reason for vagrancy of a species and determine when and where it is most likely to occur outside its normal range.

Over the last few years, I have been collecting data on vagrants that occur in Iowa. The stimulus to begin the time-consuming task of data gathering usually comes when a rarity shows up in Iowa. I find it convenient to put the data in a computer file so that I can sort it in various ways in order to make analysis easier. I start by checking the normal range of the species. This is followed by looking at books on birds of the various states and entering the date, location, circumstances, and reference into a computer file. Next, I look up all of the bold-faced references in *Audubon Field Notes/American Birds*. I have copies of the indexes of these journals in a note book, so finding the references is easy compared to pulling the journals and finding the specific citations. Another useful reference is *Distributional Checklist of North American Birds, Volume I: United States and Canada* by David DeSante and Peter Pyle (Lee Vining, California: Artemisia Press, 1986), which gives the status of all species in all states and provinces through February 1985. I am not always able to find the specific citation for birds in some of the states listed by DeSante and Pyle—finding the references would take more time and effort than I have available.

I am often frustrated by not being sure that I have all of the sightings or knowing that they are all accurate. Often the journal entries will state how many previous sightings there are for a state, so I know whether I have them all. Unfortunately, I do not have the time to look through *American Birds* for non-bold-faced citations, but do this with some vagrants that are considered almost regular. Nevertheless, the data usually gives a clear picture of the vagrancy pattern of a species that is not likely to be altered much by missing or questionable records.

On the following pages I present maps and monthly distributions for a few accidental species reported in Iowa in 1987 and 1988. The counts by month are for when the birds was first seen. The symbols on the maps are similar to those used in *Iowa Birds*:

- = winter, ▲ = spring, ● = summer, ▼ = fall
- + = one or more records, details not available to author
- solid areas = normal range

## SNOWY PLOVER

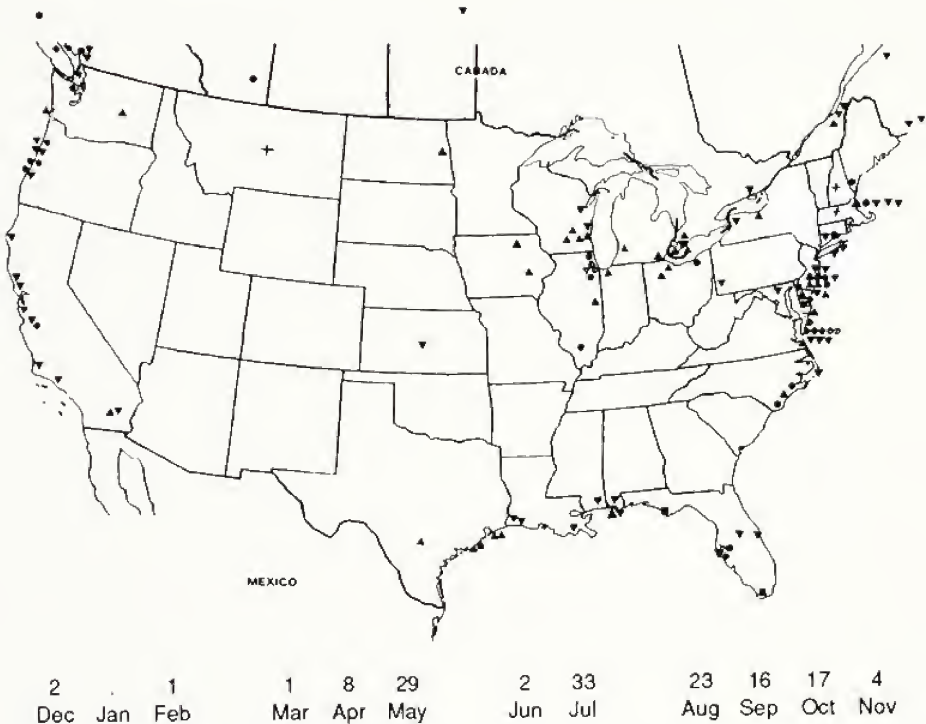


			2	2	13		4	7		2	1		
Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Jun	Jul		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov

Snowy Plover is a world-wide species known as Kentish Plover in the old world. It is a resident of the West and Gulf Coasts of the United States; part of the population moves inland to the lower Great Plains and the Great Basin to nest. Most extralimital records appear to be spring migrants; the earliest date is 28 March and most of the records are from May. Nesting has occurred in southern Saskatchewan. Although the species appears to be declining, extralimital records are on the increase, with over half occurring since 1980. Overmigration and species dispersal are likely factors for vagrancy of this species, although some of the summer/fall records may be due to misdirected fall migration.



# CURLEW SANDPIPER



Curlew Sandpiper has a narrow breeding range on the tundra of north-central Siberia and a world-wide migration range. The pattern of records in North America is similar to tundra-nesting shorebirds that winter in South America; e.g., Pectoral Sandpiper. Although a few nests have been found at Barrow, Alaska, the species is a very rare migrant in Alaska and no regular nesting areas are not known for North America. More Curlew Sandpipers are found east of the nesting areas in Africa than west of the nesting area on the east coast of Asia. Perhaps this accounts for the greater frequency on the East Coast than on the West Coast of North America. In United States, there is a marked tendency for this species to be found along the coasts and the Great Lakes. The pattern is that of a regular North American species, but it is not known whether there is an undiscovered nesting area in North America or just a wide dispersal pattern from Asiatic nesting areas.

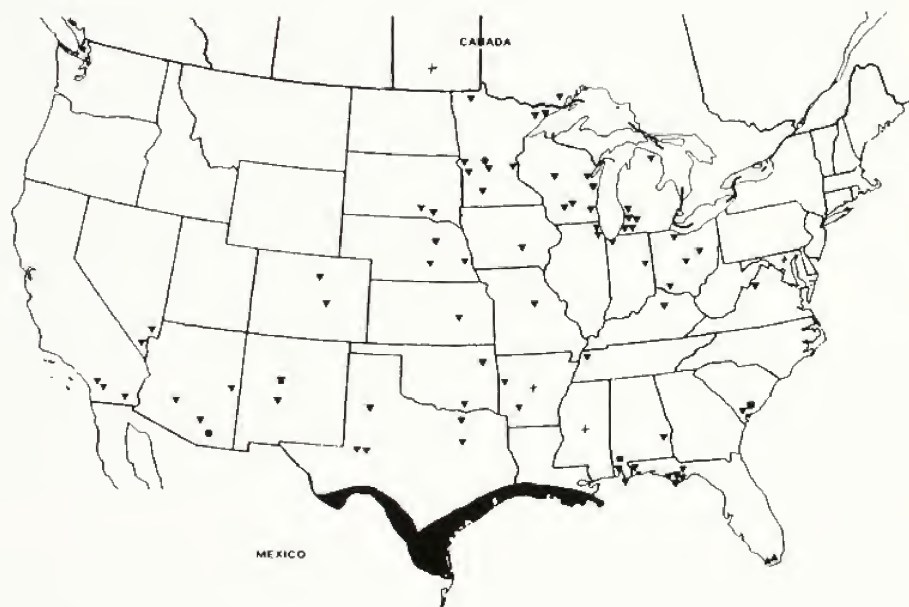
## ANCIENT MURRELET



2      1      3      1      1      .      4      12  
 Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov

Ancient Murrelet breeds in the Aleutian Islands and southern mainland of Alaska and winters on coastal waters south to Baha California. Inland vagrants are most common in fall, especially in November. Aberrant fall migration and storms may account for the vagrancy. Other Pacific Coast alcids are extremely rare as vagrants—Marbled Murrelet has been recorded in Colorado, Arkansas, and Indiana; and Kittlitz's Murrelet is listed for Indiana. East Coast alcids that have been recorded inland include Dovekie in Manitoba, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan; Thick-billed Murre in Iowa, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio; and Atlantic Puffin in Ohio. The Thick-billed Murre records from Iowa, Indiana, and Ohio are from a dispersal that occurred in the late 1800s.

## GROOVE-BILLED ANI



1	2		2				1	1		4	8	44	15
Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Jun	Jul		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov

Groove-billed Ani is a Central and South American species whose breeding range extends to the Rio Grande Valley in Texas with extralimital nesting records from northern Texas and Louisiana. Groove-billed Anis generally leave the breeding areas in Texas in the winter, most going south, but some regularly migrate up the coast as far as Louisiana. Vagrants are almost entirely fall migrants that go west, north, or further east. March records are for southern Florida and probably represent overwintering birds. Summer records are from Arizona and Minnesota.



# FIELD REPORTS-SUMMER 1988

JAMES J. DINSMORE

## WEATHER

Weather was a dominant headline in Iowa's news this summer. In two words, it was hot and dry. June was only about the 10th driest on record, but the first 6 months of 1988 were the driest on record with the state having only about 40% of its normal precipitation. Conditions were not quite so dry in July with some parts of the state receiving normal precipitation. Overall the first 7 months of 1988 were the driest on record with the state receiving about 46% of normal precipitation.



In general, it was drier in eastern than western Iowa. A few storms were severe (e.g., 5 inches at Coon Rapids on 7-8 June), but there was no real flooding anywhere and the only major tornado passed through Council Bluffs on 15 July. Numerous days had highs of 100+. About the worst was on 21 June when 24 reporting stations set or tied all-time records for the date and 21 had highs of 100 or more, topped by Sioux City's 108. The hot weather continued to the end of the period with Waterloo reporting 105 on 31 July.

## GENERAL TRENDS

Despite the extreme weather, I received about the usual number of reports. Several uncommon species were found nesting this year including Western Grebe, Canvasback, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Spotted Sandpiper, Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Owl, Winter Wren, and Great-tailed Grackle. This is about average, but disappointing given the increased atlas project coverage this year. The continued recovery by Northern Bobwhite and Carolina Wren was good news as was the astounding number of shrike nests found. Also, Bald Eagles continued to expand their Iowa nesting range. Peripheral species like Western Kingbird and Northern Mockingbird had good years and the number of new sites for Chuck's-wills-widows suggests that they are more widespread than generally thought. Close monitoring shows that Least Terns and Piping Plovers hold on in Iowa by a toenail at best. I received more reports of Henslow's Sparrows than ever before, probably because of the good grassland habitat available on Conservation Reserve Program land. That habitat probably accounts for the numerous sightings of Northern Harriers and Upland Sandpipers too. The dry conditions probably forced some ducks south from more northern breeding grounds, leading to numerous sightings of some less-common species. Were the numerous early arrival and mid-June shorebird dates an indication of poor habitat conditions for those species too? Are the July records of Tennessee, Nashville, and Black-and-white warblers an indication that this will be an early migration for that group too? Hopefully Carl Bendorf's fall report will answer the latter question.

## UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Like last year, this was a fairly dull summer. Purple Gallinule was the only Accidental species reported (except for a late report of a Curved-billed Thrasher in May), and Whimbrel, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Great-tailed Grackle, and House Finch were the only Casual species. Some of the other good finds include Ross' Goose, Greater Scaup, White-winged Scoter, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, King Rail, Sandhill Crane, Red-necked Phalarope, Herring Gull, Short-eared Owl, and Clay-colored Sparrow. I received no details on a rumored Rufous Hummingbird.

## SPECIES DATA

\* = documented; [] = record dates.

**Common Loon:** Singles at Algona on 7 Jun (MK), in Adair Co. on 14-17 Jun (BB), and at Badger Creek L., Madison Co., on 8-11 Jul (EIA, EuA) were more reports than most summers.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** 23 nests were found at Big Wall L. on 11 Jun and 2 Jul (SD, EM).

**Red-necked Grebe:** A late report was 1 on Diamond L., Poweshiek Co., on 28 Apr (DK).

**Western Grebe:** 8 adults and a nest with eggs, the first ever reported in Iowa, were at Rush L., Osceola Co. on 12 Jun (SD, EM). A young bird was there with adults on 22 Jun (DCH).



*Western Grebe nest, 12 Jun 1988, Rush L., Osceola Co. Photo by Steve Dinsmore.*

**American White Pelican:** Reported from Union Slough N.W.R. (MK, JAG), Mud L. (JJD), Lizard L. (RVH), South Twin L. (SD, JJD), Sunken Grove L. (DD), Keg L., Mills Co. (SD), Forney L. (SD, TB, JF), and Riverton A. (SD) with a peak of 82 at Forney L. It is clear that this is not an uncommon summer bird in western Iowa.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** Like the pelican, there were reports from numerous locations, including Hendrickson M. (HZ), Saylorville Res. (SD, BEN), Lylah's M., Howard Co. (MJH), Union Sl. N.W.R. (MK, SD, BB, MPr), Mud L., (SD, EM), Forney L. (SD, TB), New L. (SD), Badger L. (SD), IPL Ponds (SD), De Soto N.W.R. (SD), Blue L. (SD), and Brown's L. (SD).

**American Bittern:** Singles at Zirbel Sl., Cerro Gordo Co., on 9 Jun (JWa) and Runnels W.A. on 24 Jul (JSi) were the only reports.

**Least Bittern:** Besides singles at Princeton M. on 4 Jun (PCP), Eagle L. on 25 Jun (SD, JJD, EM), Madison Co. (EIA, EuA), and 2 at Forney L. on 5 Jun (TB), nests were found at Rush L., Osceola Co., on 12 Jun (SD, EM), and Big Wall L. on 2 Jul (SD).

**Great Blue Heron:** Colonies were active below the Saylorville Dam (BEN), at Cardinal M. (DK), and at Rice Lake (Guy Zenner fide JJD); 181 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 Jul (SD, MPr) was the largest post-breeding concentration reported.

**Great Egret:** There were the usual scattered birds; 44 at Fort Madison on 9 Jul (SD) were the most reported.

**Snowy Egret:** Single adults were at Big Wall L. on 11 Jun (SD, EM), Willow Sl. on 14 Jul (SD), and Keg L., Mills Co., on 20 Jul (SD).

**Little Blue Heron:** Single adults at Big Creek S.P. on 19 Jun (SD, BEN), Forney L. on 12 Jul (SD), Willow Sl. on 14 Jul (SD), and n of Modale on 21 Jul (SD); an immature at Diamond L., Poweshiek Co., on 29 Jul (DK); 4 immatures at Union Slough N.W.R. on 28 Jul (MK); and an adult and an immature at Badger Creek L. on 10 Jul (EIA, EuA) were typical for summer.

**Cattle Egret:** Singles in Clay, Dallas, Polk, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury counties and 9 on 4 Jul e of Spencer (MMB) were reported.

**Green-backed Heron:** 10 at L. Wapello on 4 Jul (DP) and 17 at 11 locations (DK) suggest that this species is doing fairly well.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** Colonies were active at Ventura M. (TL), Big Wall L. (13 nests, SD, EM), and Rush L., Osceola Co. (41 nests, SD, EM).



**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** 1 or 2 were seen at Big Wall L. (MPR), e of Montour, Tama Co., (Carol McMillan fide MPR), Otter Creek M. (JF), Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, BB), and Badger L. (SD).

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** 2 at New L. on 27 Jun (SD) may have summered there.

**Snow Goose:** There were the usual scattered birds in Fremont, Guthrie, Harrison, Kossuth, Monona, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury counties. Up to 35 summered at Badger L., Monona Co. (Eric Anderson fide SD).

**Ross' Goose:** 1 summered at Bays Branch (SD) [1st summer record].

**Canada Goose:** This species continued to thrive with nests or broods reported in Adair, Calhoun, Greene, Hamilton, and Monona counties.

**Green-winged Teal:** Singles or pairs were at the IPL Ponds, Riverton A., Prairie Rose S.P., Blue L., Badger L., IPS Ponds, Smith's Sl., near Lake Park, and near Harpers Ferry, far more than most summers.

**American Black Duck:** 1 was at Big Wall L. on 4 Jun (BPr, MPR).

**Northern Pintail:** Besides several adults, there were 3 nests at McIntosh Sl. (TL), 1 nest at Ventura M. (TL), a brood at Lakin Sl., Guthrie Co. (Ken Herring fide SD), and brood at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, JJD, BB).

**Northern Shoveler:** 1 at Riverton A. on 9 Jun (SD, JJD), 1 at Prairie Rose S.P. on 25 Jun (BLW), 4 on 27 Jun and 1 on 21 Jul at Badger L. (SD), a brood at Union Slough N.W.R. (JAG), and 6 nests at Ventura M. (TL) are more reports than most summers.

**Gadwall:** Single males at Rush L., Osceola Co., on 3 Jun (JJD), Badger L. on 27 Jun (SD), Montrose on 1 Jul (SD), Big Wall L. on 2 Jul (SD), and Oakland on 3 Jul (SD) and 2 pairs at Riverton A. on 9 Jun (SD, JJD) were reported.

**American Wigeon:** 1 or 2 were in Adair Co. on 1-3 Jun (BB), Dan Green Sl. on 11 Jun (SD, EM), IPL Ponds on 28-29 Jun (SD), Big Wall L. on 2 Jul (SD), Bays Branch on 16 Jul (SD, BB), and Rush L., Osceola Co., on 17 Jul (SD, JJD, BB).

**Canvasback:** A nest with eggs at Rush L., Osceola Co., on 12 Jun (SD, EM) seems to be the first found in Iowa in about 50 years; 4 summered at Montrose (RCe), 1 was at Dan Green Sl. on 11 Jun (SD, EM), and 1 was at Lock and Dam 14 on 29 Jun (PCP).

**Redhead:** Besides a few scattered reports, a nest with both Redhead and Ruddy Duck eggs was found at Rush L., Osceola Co., on 12 Jun (SD, EM), and 3 broods were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 17 Jul (SD, JJD, BB); 3 summered at Montrose (RCe).

**Ring-necked Duck:** Reported from Lee, Mills, Monona, Osceola, and Pottawattamie counties.



*Canvasback nest, 12 Jun 1988, Rush L., Osceola Co. Photo by Steve Dinsmore.*

**Greater Scaup:** Single females were at the IPL Ponds from 9 to 15 Jun (SD) and at Montrose on 1, 9 Jul (SD) [2nd, 3rd summer records].

**Lesser Scaup:** Reported from Kossuth, Lee, Osceola, Pottawattamie, Poweshiek, and Woodbury counties.

**White-winged Scoter:** 1 was 5 miles n of Keokuk through 5 Jun (\*RCe) [latest record].

**Hooded Merganser:** Reported in Calhoun, Monona and Pottawattamie counties; 3 broods were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 17 Jul (SD, JJD, EM).

**Ruddy Duck:** There were the usual birds in Dickinson, Monona, Osceola, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury counties.

**Turkey Vulture:** Nests with young were found in Allamakee and Winneshiek counties (DK).

**Osprey:** 1 at Big Creek S.P. on 5 Jun (SD) and 1 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 24 Jul (MK) were unusual for summer.

**Bald Eagle:** This was a banner year with 6 active nests including 4 in NE Iowa and 2 in S Iowa.

**Northern Harrier:** A deserted nest was at Hendrickson M. (SD, EM) and an active nest was at Cayler Prairie (PEL). Adults and at least one young were seen at Rathbun Res. in Jun (Mark Eby fide JJD). Other reports were from Adair, Bremer, Cerro Gordo, Dickinson, Emmet (pair), Howard (pair), Lyon, Marion, Mitchell, and Osceola counties, far more than normal for a summer.



- Sharp-shinned Hawk:** 1 seen in Stephens F., Lucas Co., on 16 Jun (\*BEh) is one of the few recent summer records.
- Cooper's Hawk:** Another banner year with nests reported in Allamakee (2), Clayton, Van Buren, Winneshiek (2) counties (DK) and in Warren Co. (JSi). Single birds were seen in Keokuk, Polk, Wayne, and Webster counties.
- Red-shouldered Hawk:** Present at the usual NE Iowa sites (DK).
- Broad-winged Hawk:** 2 at Forney L. on 5 Jun (TB), 1 at Holst F., Boone Co., on 9 Jul (BPr), an immature at Ledges S.P. on 16 Jul (DRe), and an immature at Big Creek S.P. on 30 Jul (SD, JSi) were the only reports.
- Swainson's Hawk:** 2 adults and 3 young were seen e of Mason City on 25 Jul (JWa); singles were at Waubesa S.P. on 13 Jun (JF) and Chichaqua W.A., Polk Co., on 15 Jul (BEh).
- Peregrine Falcon:** An unbanded immature was found dead in E Sioux Co. on 8 Jul (DCH), indicating that it is possible for Peregrine Falcon to occur in Iowa in summer.
- Northern Bobwhite:** Several people commented that they were more abundant.
- King Rail:** 1 answered a tape at Union Slough N.W.R. on 14 Jul (MK).
- Virginia Rail:** Broods were seen at Spring Run W.A. on 1, 7 Jul (MPR, EIA, EuA, HZ), Silver Lake on 8 Jul (HZ), s of Lake Park on 8, 17 Jul (HZ, SD, JJD, BB), and Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 Jul (SD, MPr), more reports than most years.
- Sora:** A brood was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 Jul (SD, MPr). Other reports were in their usual range except 1 that summered in Warren Co. (JSi).
- Purple Gallinule:** 1 was seen n of Burlington from 21 Jun to 1 Jul (\*RCe, \*JF, \*DP), the first in Iowa in 5 years.
- Common Moorhen:** Reported in Dickinson, Hamilton, Hancock, Lee, Monona, and Wright counties; a brood was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 17 Jul (SD, JJD, BB).
- Sandhill Crane:** 2 were adults at Lylah's M., Howard Co., on 23 Jul (\*MJH) [1st summer record in this century]. Will the Wisconsin birds move into Iowa and nest here? Another spring report of 1 at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 8 May (DK) was received.
- Lesser Golden-Plover:** 1 at Bays Branch on 13 Jun (SD) and 2 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 Jul (SD, MPr) were the only reports.
- Semipalmated Plover:** 1 in Woodbury Co. on 2 Jun (SD) was the last spring record while 1 at Big Creek S.P. on 15 Jul (BEh) was the first fall report [3rd earliest].
- Piping Plover:** 2 nests were at the IPL Ponds; 1 hatched 4 young but none survived (SD). There were 3 pairs at the IPS Ponds on 2 Jun (SD).
- Killdeer:** 282 at Bays Branch on 8 Jul is a large concentration for so early in summer (SD).
- American Avocet:** 2 n of Burlington on 9 Jul (JF) and 1 at Saylorville Res. on 25 Jul (SD) were the only reports.
- Greater Yellowlegs:** Take your pick on whether singles at Oakland on 21 Jun (SD) and the IPL Ponds on 22-23 Jun (SD) were going north or south; 1 at Cardinal M. on 1 Jul (DK) was the earliest fall bird and 58 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 Jul (SD, MPr) was a large concentration.
- Lesser Yellowlegs:** 1 at Oakland on 3 Jun (SD) was the last spring bird but 2 at South Twin L. on 20 Jun (SD, JJD), 14 at the IPL Ponds on 22 Jun (SD), 1 at Morse L. on 25 Jun (SD, JJD, EM), 27 at Blue L. on 27 Jun (SD), and 1 at Algona on 30 Jun (MK) are suggestive of summering birds.
- Solitary Sandpiper:** 2 on 2 Jul at Big Wall L. (SD) were the first fall birds; 129 at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, MPr) seem to contradict their name and is the largest concentration ever reported in Iowa.
- Willet:** 1 was at IPL Ponds on 22 Jun (SD)[record earliest]; other reports include 1 there 29 Jun (SD), 5 on 6 Jul (SD), and 1 at Rathbun Res. on 9 Jul (RLC).
- Spotted Sandpiper:** A nest at IPL Ponds hatched successfully (SD), one of the few recent records for the state.
- Upland Sandpiper:** Reported from Adair (40+ birds), Appanoose, Boone, Cerro Gordo (2 broods), Clay, Fremont, Greene, Hamilton (brood), Howard, Osceola (brood), Pocahontas (brood), Story (brood), and Wright counties indicating that this species is widespread in Iowa.
- Whimbrel:** 1 was at Algona on 26 Jun (\*MK) [1st summer record].
- Ruddy Turnstone:** 1 at the IPL Ponds on 16 Jun (SD)[record latest], 13 at Hendrickson M. on 29 Jul (SD)[2nd earliest], and 1 on 31 Jul n of Burlington (JF) is a remarkable summer report for this rare species.
- Sanderling:** 1 at the IPL Ponds on 3, 7 Jun (SD)[record latest], 1 at the IPL Ponds on 22, 23 Jul (SD)[record earliest], and 2 at Hendrickson M. on 29 Jul (SD) were the only reports.
- Semipalmated Sandpiper:** 18 at Blue L. on 8 Jun (SD), 34 at Riverton A. on 9 Jun (SD), 1 at IPL Ponds on 22 Jun (SD), 2 at IPL Ponds on 29 Jun (SD), and 2 at Algona on 1, 2 Jul (MK)

are very unusual dates for this species which normally does not linger in United States in summer.

**Western Sandpiper:** 3 at Oakland on 8 Jul (SD)[2nd earliest], 1 at the IPL Ponds on 14 Jul (SD), and 1 w of Lake Park on 17 Jul (SD, JJD, BB) were all in breeding plumage; 1 was also at Union Grove S.P. on 21 Jul (MPr, BPr).

**Least Sandpiper:** 1 at the IPL Ponds on 23 Jun (SD)[record earliest], 3 there on 28-29 Jun (SD), 1 at Oakland on 30 Jun (SD), 21 at Hendrickson M. on 2 Jul (HZ), and 2 at Walton L., Jefferson Co., on 2 Jul (DP) were all early.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** 102 at Riverton A. on 9 Jun (SD), 16 at Ruthven on 11 Jun (SD, EM), 1 at the IPL Ponds on 16 Jun (SD), and 1 at Blue L. on 27 Jun (SD)[record latest] indicate a late migration this year; 241 at Blue L. on 1 Jun (SD) seems to be the largest concentration reported in Iowa.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** 2 at the IPL Ponds on 19 Jul and 1 at Union Grove S.P. on 21 Jul (MPr, BPr) were the first reported.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** 7 at Riverton A. on 9 Jun (SD, JJD), 4 at Bays Branch on 21 Jun (SD), 1 at the IPL Ponds on 23 Jun (SD), 3 at Blue L. on 27 Jun (SD), and 2 at Algona on 30 Jun (MK) suggest that this species may summer in Iowa. An amazing 5,100 were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 Jul (SD, MPr), by far the most ever reported in Iowa.

**Dunlin:** 1 was at the IPL Ponds on 22 Jun (SD) [record early, late, or lost?].

**Stilt Sandpiper:** 8 at Algona on 10 Jul (MK) were the first reported; 136 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 Jul (SD, MPr) was the most reported.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** 1 at Hendrickson M. on 29 Jul (SD)[ties 3rd earliest] was the only report.

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** 1 at Algona 26-29 Jun (\*MK)[record earliest], 1 at Big Wall L. on 2 Jul (SD, details)[2nd earliest], 1 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 3 Jul (MK)[ties 3rd earliest], 3 at Hendrickson M. on 9 Jul (PM, details), 2 at Big Creek S.P. on 15 Jul (BEn), and 1 at Walton L., Jefferson Co., on 18 Jul (DP) indicate an early migration for this species this year.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** Reported from Fremont, Howard, Kossuth, Osceola, Palo Alto, Pottawattamie, and Story counties, far more than normal for summer.

**Red-necked Phalarope:** 2 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 26 Jul (\*SD, MPr)[record earliest] is one of few recent summer records.

**Franklin's Gull:** 6 at Montrose on 1 Jul (SD) and 1-3 at Saylorville Res. after 16 Jul (SD) were the only reports away from W and NW Iowa.

**Ring-billed Gull:** Reported from Appanoose, Fremont, Jackson, Lee, Polk, and Scott counties; 264 on 1 Jul and 392 on 9 Jul (SD) at different Lee County sites must include some birds that were not there all summer.

**Herring Gull:** Single adults at the IPL Ponds on 29 Jun (SD) and Montrose on 1 Jul (SD) and a single 2nd-year-bird at Red Rock Res. on 1, 24 Jul (SD, JSi) are some of few summer reports of this species in Iowa.

**Caspian Tern:** Reported from Appanoose, Des Moines, Fremont, and Polk counties.

**Common Tern:** Singles were at De Soto N.W.R. on 8 Jun (SD) and Saylorville Res. on 30 Jul (SD).

**Forster's Tern:** Birds nested at Rush L., Osceola Co. (SD) and Eagle L. (SD, JJD, EM); 62 at Saylorville Res. on 30 Jul (SD) was the only large post-breeding group noted.

**Least Tern:** 11 nests fledged 6 young at the IPL Ponds (SD); 1 was at Forney L. on 30 Jun (SD).

**Black Tern:** The only colony noted (22 nests, 66 adults) was at Big Wall L. (SD, EM); 32 at Big Creek S.P. on 15 Jul (BEn) were post-breeding birds.

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** The only comment was by Cummins who saw only 1.

**Common Barn-Owl:** A pair was seen in mid-Jun near Knoxville (BEh).

**Eastern Screech-Owl:** Several were found in Woodbury and Plymouth counties (DET) and a brood was found in Adair Co. (BB).

**Long-eared Owl:** A nest was found in Clarke Co. (Beth Brown fide JSi).

**Short-eared Owl:** 2 pairs were seen in Emmet Co.; 1 nested and produced 3 young (BM) for one of the few recent nestings of this species; 1 photographed near Montour, Tama Co., in Jun (MBro) looks suspiciously like a young bird; 2 birds had been seen in the area earlier.

**Chuck-will's-widow:** Besides birds at the usual Fremont Co. site, others were heard at 2 other Fremont Co. sites on 9 Jun (SD, JJD), SW Pottawattamie Co. on 27 Jun (SD), Shimek F. near Donnellson on 1 Jul (SD), Davis Co. on 1 Jul (SD), and Big Sand Mound Preserve on 4 Jul (Tim Brush fide PCP).



- Whip-poor-will:** Counts of 53 heard in Fremont Co. on 9 Jun (SD, JJD), 29 in Mills Co. on 7 Jul (SD), and 64 in Lee Co., 19 in Van Buren Co., and 11 in Davis Co. all on 1 Jul (SD) indicate this species is very common in parts of S Iowa.
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** Reported in Allamakee, Boone, Clayton, Dubuque, Hardin, Jones, Marshall, Van Buren, and Winneshiek counties.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** 3 nests with young were found in Winneshiek Co. (DK).
- Pileated Woodpecker:** Birds were present below the Saylorville Dam all summer (BEn) and a nest with young was found in White Pine Hollow on 18 Jun (DK).
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** 1 on 1 Jun at Stone S.P. (SD) and 1 on 3 Jun in Pottawattamie Co. (SD) were the only reports.
- Acadian Flycatcher:** 1 or 2 were reported at the usual sites in Appanoose, Lee, Muscatine, Van Buren, and Warren counties. A pair was feeding a young cowbird at Picture Rock P., Jones Co., on 1 Jul (DRe).
- Alder Flycatcher:** 2 in Webster Co. on 1 Jun (MPr) and 1 in Clay Co. on 2 Jun (JJD) were the only reports.
- Willow Flycatcher:** Reported from Appanoose, Cerro Gordo, Jefferson, Jones, Polk, Tama, and Van Buren counties.
- Least Flycatcher:** Besides the usual birds in NE Iowa (Allamakee, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, and Winneshiek counties), singles were in Lucas Co. on 16 Jun (BEh), Hamilton Co. on 22 Jun (BEh), and Boone Co. on 23 Jun (JJD).
- Western Kingbird:** One observer saw 51 birds in Plymouth, Woodbury, Monona, Harrison, Pottawattamie, Mills, and Fremont counties this summer (SD); 1 near Atlantic on 10 Jun (MAP) and 1 e of Des Moines on 26 Jun (JF) were out of their usual range.
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** A male was seen e of Treynor, Pottawattamie Co., on 3 Jun (SD, details).
- Purple Martin:** Mosman had his best year ever at Elkhart with 78 pairs and 321 young banded (DDM) while all 7 young from 2 nests in Boone died from the heat (DRe).
- Cliff Swallow:** 1,000 at Big Wall L. on 26 Jul (SD, MPr) was the only post-breeding concentration reported.
- Brown Creeper:** 4 at Huron Island, Des Moines Co., on 21 Jun acted territorial (PCP).
- Carolina Wren:** The news from SE Iowa was encouraging: 4 summered at Shimek F. near Argyle (RCe), 12 were at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 17 Jul (RCe), and 1 was n of Iowa City on 24 Jul (JF).
- Winter Wren:** 2 adults and 3 fledged young at White Pine Hollow, Dubuque Co., on 18 Jun (DK) is only the 4th nesting record for Iowa.
- Eastern Bluebird:** Reeves reported good production in Boone Co. (DRe) but nests were down 50% in Elkhart (DDM) and 67% in Cherokee (MMB).
- Veery:** Reported from the usual sites in Allamakee, Boone, Dubuque, Scott, Tama, and Winneshiek counties.
- Northern Mockingbird:** Reported from Adair, Clinton, Johnson, Muscatine, Page, Ringgold, Van Buren, and Washington counties, a continuation of the increase noted last year.
- Curve-billed Thrasher:** 1 was seen and photographed at Badger L, Monona Co., on 13 May (Tom Sorenson, Dan Gifford fide SD).
- Loggerhead Shrike:** I had reports from Appanoose, Boone (2 broods), Cass, Fremont, Greene (nest), Hamilton, Hardin (brood), Marshall, Polk (brood), Story (3 broods), Tama, and Wapello counties indicating a good comeback by this species. The best news was the 70+ nests found in only half of Adair Co. (Dave DeGeus fide JJD)!
- White-eyed Vireo:** Singles were reported at the usual sites in Allamakee, Boone, Davis, and Polk counties.
- Bell's Vireo:** Reported from Appanoose, Hamilton, Jefferson (nest), Lee, Monona, Polk, Story, Van Buren, Warren, Wayne, and Winneshiek counties; 12 were in Mahaska Co. on 26 Jul (DK).
- Blue-winged Warbler:** 1-2 were in Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. in Jun (RLC, MPr), a pair was at a nest in Shimek F. near Argyle on 6 Jun (RCe, MPr), and 1 was heard at Chichaqua W.A. on 16 Jun (JJD).
- Tennessee Warbler:** A male was singing at Lakin Sl., Guthrie Co., on 16 Jul (SD)[3rd summer record].
- Nashville Warbler:** A male was singing near Colo on 29 Jul (EM)[2nd earliest].
- Northern Parula:** Up to 4 were at the usual Lee and Van Buren county sites; 1 was at Preparation Canyon S.P., Monona Co., on 12 Jun (JF).



- Chestnut-sided Warbler:** Singles were at Holst F., Boone Co., on 1 Jun (MPr), Hardin Co. on 3 Jun (MPr), Ames on 5 Jun (PM), Mason City on 10 Jun (JWa), and Winneshiek Co. on 11 Jun (DK). The latter 2 perhaps were nesting.
- Yellow-throated Warbler:** 1 at Pine Lake S.P., Hardin Co., on 3 Jun, 4 Jul (MPr, BPr), 1 in Shimek F. near Argyle on 7 Jun (MPr), 2-3 at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 25 Jun (RLC) and 10 Jul (HZ), and 2 below the Saylorville Dam on 9 Jul (BEn) were the only reports.
- Cerulean Warbler:** Reported from the usual sites in Allamakee, Boone, Lee, Monona, Polk, Van Buren, and Webster counties.
- Black-and-white Warbler:** A female with a brood patch was mist-netted near Milford on 4 Jul (NPB). Did it nest there or was it a migrant?
- Prothonotary Warbler:** 1 at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. in Jun (DP, MPr), 9 males on Huron Island, Des Moines Co., on 21 Jun (PCP), 1 at Riverton A. on 30 Jun (SD), and 3 below the Saylorville Dam on 9 Jul (BEn) were the only reports.
- Worm-eating Warbler:** Reported only from Shimek F. near Argyle and Lacey-Keosauqua S.P.
- Louisiana Waterthrush:** Reported from Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (adult with brood, HZ), Shimek F. near Argyle (RCe, MPr), and Holst F. (MPr).
- Kentucky Warbler:** Up to 8 were at the usual Boone, Lee, Van Buren, and Warren county sites; 1 at Stone S.P. on 2 Jun (SD) was a new site.
- Mourning Warbler:** A male was in NE Boone Co. on 20 Jun (EM)[record latest].
- Hooded Warbler:** 1 at Shimek F. near Argyle in Jun and Jul (RCe, JF) and 3 in Yellow River F. on 4 Jun (DK) were the only reports.
- Yellow-breasted Chat:** Reported from Allamakee, Boone, Des Moines, Jefferson, Lee, Mahaska, and Polk counties.
- Summer Tanager:** 1 or 2 were found in Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (MPr, HZ), Pottawattamie Co. (BLW), Waubesa S.P. (TB), and Woodland Mounds Preserve, Warren Co. (JSi).
- Scarlet Tanager:** Reported from Appanoose, Boone, Jones, Polk, Tama, and Van Buren counties.
- Blue Grosbeak:** Steve Dinsmore found 26 in Fremont, Monona, and Pottawattamie counties during the summer including a nest at the IPL Ponds. A male at Big Sand Mound Preserve on 4 Jul (Tim Brush fide PCP) was the only report from eastern Iowa.
- Dickcissel:** Petersen noted counts were up on his Breeding Bird Surveys, which concurs with my own observations.
- Clay-colored Sparrow:** 1 male was w of Larchwood, Lyon Co., on 3 Jun (JJD).
- Lark Sparrow:** Singles in Dallas and Fremont counties on 10 Jun (BPr, MPr) and 15 in Lee Co. on 16 Jul (RCe) were the only reports.
- Henslow's Sparrow:** Up to 14 were seen near Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. in Jul (MPr, BPr, RCe, JF\*); 1 or 2 males were found near Agency, Wapello Co., on 1 Jul (SD), in SC Appanoose Co. on 9 Jul (RLC), near Lamoni on 9 Jul, and at two Ringgold Co. sites on 9 Jul (SD), probably the most reports ever in Iowa in one year for this elusive species.
- Swamp Sparrow:** Adults were seen carrying food to young at Deweys Pasture on 11 Jun (SD, EM), Zirkel Sl., Cerro Gordo Co., on 16 Jun (JWa), and South Twin L. on 20 Jun (SD, JJD), some of the few confirmed nesting records of this species in Iowa.
- White-throated Sparrow:** 1 was seen near Milford on 6 Jun (NPB)[3rd latest] and 1 was singing in Madison Co. on 20 Jun (EIA, EuA)[record latest].
- Yellow-headed Blackbird:** 1 at Princeton on 4 Jun (PCP) was east of its usual range.
- Great-tailed Grackle:** Up to 4 were seen several times at Forney L. Singles were at Big Wall L. on 2 Jul (SD) and s of Keg L., Mills Co., on 20 Jul (SD). A nest with eggs at Eagle L., Hancock Co., on 25 Jun (SD, JJD, EM) is the furthest northeast record in the state and extends the nesting range 35 miles.
- Orchard Oriole:** Reported from Boone, Cass, Fremont, Madison (nest), Story (nest), Tama, and Washington (nest) counties.
- House Finch:** A pair in Boone on 24-31 Jul (DRe), reports of 25-30 including family groups in the Davenport area (PCP), and family groups in Waterloo (OU) indicate further expansion and consolidation of this species' range.
- Pine Siskin:** 1 n of Iowa City 25 Jun-2 Jul (JF) was the only report.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Elaine Armstrong (Booneville); Eugene Armstrong (Booneville); Bart Ballard (Fairfax); Neil P. Bernstein (Cedar Rapids); Tanya Bray (Omaha, NE); Marion M. Brewer (Cherokee); Mark Bro (Montour); Robert Cecil (Keokuk); Gay Crim (Boone); Raymond L. Cummins (Centerville); Dennis Dahl (Pocahontas); James J. Dinsmore (Ames); Steve Dinsmore (Ames); Bruce Ehresman

(Boone); Bery Engebretsen (Johnston); Jim Fuller (Iowa City); James A. Gallagher (Ames); Ronald V. Harms (Laurens); Douglas C. Harr (Larchwood); Mary Jo Hartogh (Elma); Jack Jones (Sioux City); Matthew Kenne (Algona); Darwin Koenig (Montezuma); Nick A. Kubik (Tama); Ted LaGrange (Clear Lake); Sharon Laub (Rippey); Peter E. Lowther (Chicago, IL); Paul Martsching (Ames); Bob Moats (Estherville); D. Dean Mosman (Elkhart); Erik Munson (Ames); Marietta A. Petersen (Walnut); Peter C. Petersen (Davenport); Beth Proescholdt (Liscomb); Mark Proescholdt (Liscomb); Diane Porter (Fairfield); Doug A. Reeves (Boone); Jim Sinclair (Indianola); Dale Stone (Hinton); Douglas E. Trapp (Sioux City); Opal Uher (Waterloo); Jan Walter (Mason City); Barbara L. Wilson (Hastings); and Hank Zaletel (Colo).

## COMMENT

The dry hot weather had several effects on birds. Obviously, flooded fields were absent and many marshes and ponds were dry or nearly so by the end of the period. Thus migrant shorebirds had few places to feed and presumably some ducks and other aquatic birds lost broods when marshes dried up. An exposed robin nest in my yard was deserted in the midst of the hottest weather--was such a phenomena common this year?

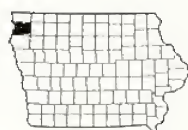
I think a more serious effect of the weather was more indirect. The dry weather had a drastic effect on the state's hay and pasture land, leading to requests by livestock producers to allow grazing and haying on land that had been set aside in federal agricultural programs. In June, the annual set-aside land was opened up for haying and grazing, and although not all farmers took advantage of that change, it was obvious that much of the plant cover on that land was soon being removed, mainly by haying. Of more serious consequences to birds was a similar demand affecting land in the Conservation Reserve Program. This land, set aside for 10 years, totalled 1.5 million acres in Iowa this year. Because of the long-term nature of the program, some of that land finally had some good cover on it this year and provided good habitat for various grassland birds. In mid-June, the Conservation Reserve Program land was opened for mowing and an unknown percentage of that cover was soon being cut. This was probably late enough to not disturb early nests but certainly some re-nests and second nests of birds like pheasants, meadowlarks, and other grassland birds were lost as well as some adults. Of equal concern is the loss of winter cover on those lands and the poor early nesting cover those lands will have in 1989.

I greatly appreciate the help of Steve Dinsmore in compiling and writing this report. I also appreciate the promptness and thoroughness with which contributors submitted their reports.



## YOUNG PEREGRINE FALCON FOUND DEAD IN NORTHWEST IOWA

DOUGLAS C. HARR



On 9 July 1988, I received a telephone call from Bruce Morrison, of Sheldon. He reported that his next-door neighbor, Paul Miller, had discovered an unusual and beautiful raptor dead on his farmland between Sheldon and Matlock, in Sioux County. Morrison, a media specialist at Northwest Iowa Technical College, and a well-known local wildlife artist, was sure the bird was a Peregrine Falcon. I requested that he preserve the bird in his freezer until I could pick it up for examination in a few days.

When I unwrapped the frozen carcass I found an immature Peregrine Falcon, Continental form, identical to that pictured in *A Field Guide to Hawks North America*, by Clark and Wheeler. The first question that came to mind was what was this young Peregrine doing in northwest Iowa in mid-summer? There are no recent reports of wild, nesting Peregrines in Iowa, and it is unlikely that northwest Iowa ever had any nesting, due to lack of suitable habitat.

The bird was sent to Nongame Biologist Doug Reeves at the Department of Natural Resources and to James Dinsmore at Iowa State University for further verification. Because the bird exhibited no external injuries, it was then forwarded to Madison, Wisconsin, where US Fish and Wildlife Service veterinarians could make a more complete post-mortem examination to determine the cause of death.

Dinsmore and Reeves believed the bird to be a young-of-the-year, and thus likely to have been fledged within a few miles of where it had been found. I contacted Paul Miller to learn more about how and where he found the bird. He related that on 8 July 1988 he was driving into the abandoned farmstead on his property when he spotted it lying on the ground alongside the driveway. I then visited the site and found it to be directly beneath two old electric lines, indicating a possible collision as cause of death. I also visited several farm elevators in the area, hoping to either see an adult or immature Peregrine, and visited with some elevator managers. Reeves proposed that these tall, flat-topped buildings might serve as nest sites or hunting perches for Peregrines in an area otherwise devoid of anything that might appear suitable. This search yielded no other observations or clues.

We then are left with a mystery--was this young Peregrine raised locally? If so, where, and are there any remaining parents or nestmates? Unless someone living in the area observed this or other Peregrines and comes forth with new information, we can only speculate about this young falcon and its presence at a most unusual location and time in Iowa.

P.O. Box 65, Larchwood, Iowa 51241



## PURPLE GALLINULE IN DES MOINES COUNTY

ROBERT CECIL



On 20 June 1988, I was contacted by Gary Wagner, a Burlington property owner, regarding a Purple Gallinule that had been present on his acreage since late May. I made arrangements with Elizabeth Christiansen, Chuck Fuller, and Jane Fuller to look for the bird the following morning. At 7:30 a.m. on 21 June, we approached a small, recently constructed farm pond containing dead trees and shrubs as well as emergent willows and other vegetation. The bird flushed from tall grass along the bank and landed in a dense willow about 20 feet from shore. After some maneuvering, we were able to get good views of the bird as it moved slowly through the foliage. Features observed included blue-purple underparts and head, brown back, red bill with yellow tip, pale blue frontal shield, white undertail coverts, and long yellow legs. The bird was chicken-like in size and structure. The only significant behavioral characteristics included the continual flicking of its tail, and the stealth with which it moved through the willow. No sounds were noted. The bird was also seen and documented by Jim Fuller and Diane Porter. Mr. Wagner reported that the bird was last seen on 31 June.

Purple Gallinule is a rare visitor to Iowa. There are five records since 1960 (Dinsmore, J. J. et al. 1984. *Iowa Birds*; Haldy, L. 1983. Purple Gallinule in Iowa County. *Iowa Bird Life* 53:58). Including the present bird, five birds were first seen in May and one in late summer. Mr. Wagner deserves appreciation for recognizing the rarity and significance of his find, for contacting birders, and for his graciousness in showing others to this unusual and beautiful bird.

327 S. 6th St., Keokuk, IA 52632



*Purple Gallinule, Des Moines County, 24 May 1988. Photo by Gary L. Wagner.*

## CURVE-BILLED THRASHER IN MANONA COUNTY

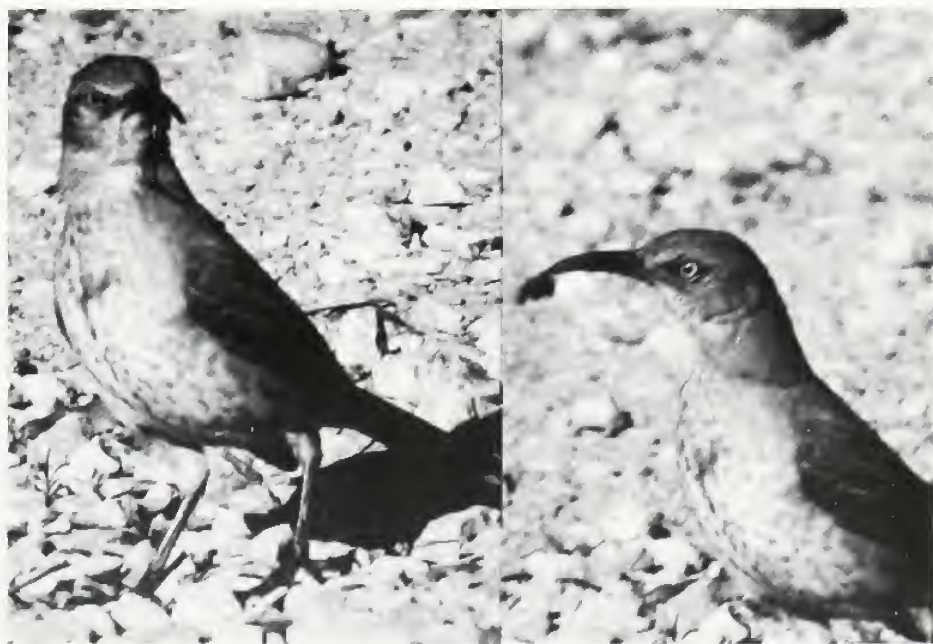
STEVE DINSMORE, TOM SORESENSEN, AND DAN GIFFORD



On 13 May 1988, Tom Sorensen, Dan Gifford, and several other persons noticed an unusual bird in the gravel parking lot of the Missouri River Unit Headquarters of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at Badger Lake, Manona County. Sorensen took several photographs at close range, and he and Gifford later identified the bird as a Curve-billed Thrasher.

The bird frequented the gravel parking lot around the headquarters on the 13th, but was not seen after that date. The following description was written from the photographs and from comments by the observers. The bird was very tame and allowed the observers to approach to within 10 feet as it hopped around on the parking lot. The bird was roughly robin-sized, although no direct comparisons were made. The bird's most distinctive feature was the bill. It was long, evenly curved, heavy, and dark colored. Also distinctive was the reddish eye. The underparts were whitish with some blurry streaking, particularly on the flanks, breast, and throat. The undertail coverts were slightly buffy. The upperparts were gray. The wings were also gray and showed two prominent white wing bars. The tail was long and dark, and the longest tail feathers showed narrow white tips. The legs were dark.

The wing bars and distinctly mottled underparts indicate that the bird was of the more southerly race, *Toxostoma curvirostre curvirostri*. There are three other records of Curve-billed Thrasher in Iowa: 25 June 1975 at Spirit Lake, September 1980 to March 1981 at Rathbun Reservoir, and 17 November to March 1981 near Solon.



Curve-billed Thrasher, Monona County, 13 May 1988. Photo by Tom Sorensen.



## I.O.U. BUSINESS

### SPRING BUSINESS MEETING

Mason City, 21 May 1988, 4:15 to 5:00 p.m.

ANN M. BARKER, SECRETARY

*Presiding:* Jim Dinsmore, President

#### *Minutes*

The minutes of the Fall 1987 meeting were summarized. They will be published in *Iowa Bird Life*. The president will call for their approval at the fall meeting after publication.

#### *Reports*

Treasurer: Francis Moore distributed financial statements for the year 1987 and a proposed budget. These were discussed and reviewed. The financial report will be audited. The Board has already approved the budget.

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### Treasurer's Report--1987

Assets 31 Dec 1986		\$17,115.06
1987 Addition		\$1,876.89
Assets 31 Dec 1987		\$18,991.95
Cash	7,506.29	
CDs	11,038.64	
Interest due	447.02	
Income 1987		\$8,757.37
Contributions	1,490.29	
Members	623.50	
Bird-a-thon	341.80	
Birdline	256.00	
Royalties	268.99	
Membership/Subscriptions	6,149.00	
First member	4,744.00	
Second member	252.00	
Third+ member	12.00	
Life memberships	250.00	
Subscriptions	891.00	
Sales	148.70	
Interest	969.38	
Meetings	217.61	
Expenses 1987		\$6,880.48
Publications Committee	5,570.77	
Iowa Bird Life	4,694.48	
I.O.U. News	796.29	
Other	80.00	
Membership Committee	151.48	
Records Committee	18.91	
Treasurer	152.39	
Board of Directors	4.48	
Research Grant	100.00	
Birdline	431.26	
Materials	351.78	
Other	99.41	

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Records Committee: No report.

Library/Historical Committee: The committee met in April in Montezuma. Their major concern has been the archives. An arrangement has been made with the Iowa State University Library where materials can be kept and will be available to members. The committee is attempt-



ing to obtain records and notes from people who have been active in Iowa ornithology in the past. Hank Zaletel is putting together a file of newspaper articles.

**Membership Committee:** The committee has not met. Brochures were reprinted recently and will be distributed. Total membership at present is 490. Rick Hollis inquired whether potential members could be sent a copy of the newsletter. Hank Zaletel replied that this would require a reprinting.

**Publications Committee:** The committee met in April in Montezuma. The budget for this year was approved. In addition, the committee discussed refereeing articles for "Iowa Bird Life", publishing book reviews in each issue of the journal, setting up an exchange for copies of the journal, and the continual need for good journal material.

**Big Day Committee:** Ray Cummins reported that the same format was used this year as in 1987. Several teams entered. In the county division, the winner was the Fremont team, "BJ's Boys", with 112 species. This was followed by the "Big Deal" team, Woodbury County, with 107, and the "Rathbun" team, Appanoose County, with 97. In the state division, four teams competed. The winner was "Tetrault's Tigers" with 160 species. "Tetrault's Tigers" also captured third place on another day with 138 species. Second place was the "T, A & A" team with 153 species and fourth place was the "Quad-City" team with 133. A total of 210 species was seen by all teams. The committee is hoping for more participation next year. A total of \$562.55 in donations was collected.

**Education Committee:** Rick Hollis reported that the committee met in April. Their project is a booklet with packaged activities for teachers on Iowa birds. Dinsmore will appoint the committee for another year.

**Breeding Bird Atlas Committee:** Carol Thompson reported that the committee has not met since November. There are four blockbuster field trips scheduled in June, one in each quadrant of the state. Details were given and members were encouraged to participate. New atlas cards are now available. Both the Iowa State University and University of Iowa presses are interested in publishing the atlas data.

*Old Business:* none.

*New Business:*

At its last meeting, the Board felt that there was no need for a dues increase and recommended that dues remain the same for 1989. It was moved (Zaletel, seconded by Hollis) that dues remain the same for 1989. The motion passed.

For the nominating committee, Ray Cummins presented the following slate of officers and board members: Secretary: Ann Barker; Treasurer: Francis Moore; and Board Members, Beth Brown and Eugene Armstrong. Each available position was considered in turn and there were no other nominations. The nominees were elected to 2-year terms.

Dinsmore discussed committee appointments. The Records Committee nominated Steve Dinsmore to replace Barb Wilson, whose term is expiring, and the Library/Historical Committee nominated Darwin Koenig for another term. Francis Moore will speak to Bob Livermore about serving another term on the Membership Committee.

**Upcoming meetings:** The Fall 1988 meeting has been proposed for Fort Dodge. Bill Cunningham, who had been in charge, has moved out of the state. Tom Tierney of Fort Dodge issued an invitation to the I.O.U. from the local Sierra Club for the fall meeting. Possible dates were discussed and the consensus seemed to be that early September was most desirable. Plans for the tri-state meeting to be held in May 1990 are progressing well. A short discussion was held regarding the Spring 1989 meeting and the general feeling was that most members would prefer that it be held in eastern Iowa.

T-shirts with the words "Iowa Ornithologist's Union" are now available. Members interested should contact Jim Dinsmore.

Francis Moore reminded members that the new membership brochure and checklist are available.

After a round of applause for the retiring committee members, a motion was made (Zaletel, seconded by Hollis) to adjourn.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

*Mason City, 21 May 1988, 5:15 to 5:45 p.m.*

ANN M. BARKER, SECRETARY

*Members present:* Jim Dinsmore (presiding), Eugene Armstrong, Ann Barker, Beth Brown, Bob Cecil, Francis Moore, Jim Sinclair, and Carol Thompson.

### *New Business*

The following committee appointments were considered: Records: Steve Dinsmore; Library/Historical: Darwin Koenig; Publications: Pete Petersen; and Membership: Bob Livermore. It was moved (Barker, seconded by Moore) to approve these appointments. The motion passed.

Details of the proposed fall meeting at Fort Dodge were discussed. The Board prefers the date of September 10th with an alternate date of the 17th. Possible sites are a motel or a camp. Dinsmore will speak to Tom Tierney about securing a date and place for the meeting. It was moved (Armstrong, seconded by Dinsmore) to accept the invitation from Fort Dodge. The motion passed.

The next Board meeting will be held in conjunction with the regular fall meeting.

## FROM THE EDITOR

THOMAS H. KENT

As my third year as editor of *Iowa Bird Life* draws to a close, I would like to thank Field Reports editors Carl Bendorf, Ross Silcock, Bob Myers, and Jim Dinsmore for their excellent efforts. I am sorry to report that Bob Myers has decided to give up the spring report. I think he has done an outstanding job for three years. A replacement will be named soon. I would also like to thank Carl Bendorf for handling the mailing and Dick Tetrault for always being willing to help with the stuffing of envelopes. I also thank Jim Dinsmore and Beth Brown for reviewing manuscripts.

I apologize for not getting the journal out on time this year. There have been delays in getting some of the regular material ready, I have not been aggressive in soliciting material this year, and spontaneous submissions are down this year. The current issue has been ready to go for several months except for eight pages that needed to be filled. We print a minimum of 28 pages per issue with extra pages as needed in sets of eight. The total pages in 1988 are down from the last two years.

In spite of my plea a year ago, I have received no letters to be published and very few indications of what the readers like or dislike about the journal. Let me hear from you.



*Trumpeter Swans, Des Moines, 6 February 1988. Photo by Steve Dinsmore.*



*Trumpeter Swan, Otter Creek Marsh, 23 Dec 1984. Photo by T. H. Kent.*